April 10, 2020

ILLINOIS HEALTH AND HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
MEMORANDUM

TO: Chief Executive Officers, Member Hospitals and Health Systems
    Chief Operating Officers
    Chief Medical Officers
    Chief Nursing Officers
    Chief Quality Officers
    Chief Financial Officers
    Emergency Preparedness Contacts
    Emergency Department Directors
    Behavioral Constituency Section
    Government Relations Personnel
    In-House Counsel
    Public Relations Directors

FROM: A.J. Wilhelmi, President & CEO
    Tim Nuding, Senior Vice President, Member Services & Corporate Finance
    Keneatha Johnson, Director, Quality, Safety, and Health Policy

SUBJECT: IHA COVID-19 Update – April 10, 2020

Following is a brief recap of today’s top developments.

Situational Awareness
The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) today announced 1,465 new COVID-19 cases and 68 deaths. The total number of cases in the state is 17,887 in 83 counties, with a total of 596 deaths.

Focus on Healthcare Disparities
Governor J.B. Pritzker’s daily press briefing focused on disparities in healthcare. The Governor released guidance to the healthcare community on obligations to provide healthcare in an “ethical, equitable and nondiscriminatory manner to people of color, people with disabilities, and all Illinoisans.” He also announced a partnership between Lurie Children’s Hospital and federally qualified health centers on the south and west sides of Chicago to process COVID-19 tests locally for faster turnaround of results. A similar COVID-19 testing operation will begin in the Metro East region next week. Three Southern Illinois Healthcare Foundation locations will take 470 specimens daily and send them to Anderson Hospital for processing. Additionally, a state-run South Suburban drive-through testing center will open early next week in the Markham-Harvey area.
IDPH Director Ngozi Ezike, M.D., compared COVID-19 death rates of blacks and whites in Illinois:

- 12 times as many blacks in their 50s than whites of the same age die from COVID-19;
- 8 times as many blacks in their 60s than whites of the same age die from COVID-19; and
- 10 times as many blacks in their 70s than whites of the same age die from COVID-19.

Dr. Ezike announced the creation of a COVID-19 Equity Team to address health disparities challenges related to the virus.

**HHS Announces Release of Provider Payments**
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced today that it is beginning to deposit the first wave of payments to hospitals and other providers from the $100 billion Public Health Social Services Emergency Fund included in the IHA-supported CARES Act. The first infusion of funds will deliver $30 billion to assist providers with the drastically higher costs and lost revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The payments are based on Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) reimbursements in 2019. An overview of the formula, distribution and other details as announced by HHS are outlined in an [IHA memo](https://www.iha.org).

**CMS Suspends Rules to Maximize Healthcare Workers**
The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has suspended a number of rules so that hospitals, clinics, and other healthcare facilities can boost their frontline medical staffs during the COVID-19 pandemic. CMS says these changes, effective immediately, impact doctors, nurses, and other clinicians nationwide, and focus on reducing supervision and certification requirements so that practitioners can be hired quickly and perform work to the fullest extent of their licenses. The new waivers sharply expand the workforce flexibilities CMS announced on March 30. For details, see a CMS [press release](https://www.cms.gov), CMS [fact sheet](https://www.cms.gov) and IHA [fact sheet](https://www.iha.org).

**Update on Alternate Care Facilities**
Governor Pritzker said this afternoon Alternate Care Facility construction for a former medical office building in Elgin, MetroSouth Medical Center and Westlake Hospital is scheduled to be completed on April 24, followed by a few days of training for medical staff prior to the opening of those facilities. Construction at Vibra Hospital in Springfield is scheduled to be completed by May 9.

Also this afternoon, Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot announced the completion of Phase 2 of the McCormick Place Alternate Care Facility, with 1,750 additional beds. She said more than 400 medical staff have been hired, with more than 300 of them completing onsite training. Nick Turkal, the facility’s executive director, said the site will be able to receive COVID-19 patients (lower acuity patients) by the middle of next week, with referral systems now being worked out with local hospitals.

**Response to Chicago Call for PPE Donations and Volunteers**
Yesterday, Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot thanked businesses, organizations and individuals for stepping up to support the city’s COVID-19 pandemic response. To date, nearly 2 million pieces of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has been donated to the city and more than 1,700 Chicagoans have joined the Chicago Medical Reserve Corps.
FDA on Decontamination and Reuse of N95s
Today, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced it has issued a second emergency use authorization (EUA) to decontaminate compatible N95 or N95-equivalent respirators for reuse by healthcare workers in hospital settings. The EUA supports decontamination of approximately 750,000 N95 respirators per day. The FDA has granted an emergency use authorization to STERIS Corporation for selected sterilization systems that use vaporized hydrogen peroxide. The sterilizers can process up to 10 respirators at one time and take 28 minutes to complete. Each respirator can be reprocessed up to 10 times for single-user reuse.

FEMA on PPE Seizure Rumors
The latest update on the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Coronavirus Rumor Control webpage addresses the rumor: Is FEMA seizing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) or re-routing medical supplies when it’s delivered to the U.S.? FEMA responds: Fact: FEMA and Customs Border Patrol are working to prevent fraud when PPE and medical supplies enter the U.S. from overseas. PPE being distributed internally within the U.S. is not being seized or re-routed by FEMA. To report hoarding or price gouging of PPE, contact the National Center for Disaster Fraud at 866-720-5721 or disaster@leo.gov.

New Online COVID-19 Screening Tool
Apple, in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has released a new online screening tool to find out what actions a person who is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 can take. The tool also provides links to state public health departments and general information on COVID-19, including self-care resources. The tool is available in the App store. Search for Apple COVID-19.

SIREN
To register for the State of Illinois Rapid Electronic Notification System (SIREN), go to https://siren.illinois.gov/agreement.php or email dph.siren@illinois.gov

Resources
- IDPH webpage on COVID-19
- Illinois COVID-19 website for the public - coronavirus.illinois.gov
- CDC Homepage for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
- Chicago Department of Public Health COVID-19 webpage
- IHA webpage on COVID-19

If you have questions or comments, please contact Tim Nuding, Senior Vice President, Member Services and Corporate Finance at 217-541-1164 or tnuding@team-iha.org